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FINANCIAL NEWS AND COMMENT

Stocks Decline Sharply in Last Hour on Increased Dealing.

LIQUIDATION IS GENERAL

Mexican Situation Does Not Encourage Optimism in Wall Street.

General liquidation, apparently of margin accounts in the commission houses, was the most striking development in the stock market yesterday. In the first hour there was a good deal of activity of a two sided nature, which seemed to represent chiefly the operations of professional traders. Thereafter, until the last hour, the market maintained, rather nervously and unsteadily, some rally from the earliest depression. In the final hour, however, the exciting cause and without any obvious initiative of speculative origin, there was on a steady selling movement which could have had but one source, namely, the margin accounts of the miscellaneous public interest that has been in the market.

This interest has not been large, but the afternoon selling was proportioned to it. While individual transactions were of moderate size, there could be no systematic selling of the market. It proceeded at the slow rate between 2 and 3 o'clock about 150,000 shares were dealt in, or much more than one-third of the day's total volume of business. There was no sign that this sharp decline which accompanied this selling was accelerated by speculative pressure, and indeed professional traders were in the main indisposed or afraid to take the short side.

As result of the late dealings the market at the close showed a large number of substantial losses, ranging from 1 to 3 points, and final prices were the lowest of the session, while the closing tone was weak. There were no conspicuous leaders in the continuation of the decline, the peculiar feature of the further fall being its very general nature.

Perhaps the afternoon selling was the stock market's automatic response to the question whether Wall Street was taking all day, how the Mexican situation should be regarded from the standpoint of prices. There was practically no talk in the financial district about anything else than Mexican affairs. The President's address to Congress was not available for perusal during the market session, but it contributed nothing to the enlightenment of the financial community.

The blunt truth about the situation is that the second front of the war is that if the United States becomes engaged in warfare in Mexico the war will be the inevitable outcome of the Administration policy, however necessary it may be to support the Government once the issue is joined. It does not appear to financial observers that the course to which the country is now committed can have other than war, and this being the case, there is a question concerned so much with questions about the necessity of war or the degree of its popularity as with the practical bearing it will have on values and volumes. A good many arguments have been heard that military expenditures will make for a kind of prosperous activity, but reasoning of this kind in the kind of reasoning which derives notions of prosperity from confrontation and antagonism.

The fact of the matter would seem to be that the Mexican imbroglio is likely to prove only an additional factor of disturbance and strain at a time of serious economic unsettlement on other political accounts. Barring complications it is not likely to produce a very adverse effect on the money market, at least not immediately, although even the present medium of exchange liquidity may be temporarily diminished until such time as seen just what is going to happen. Government bonds shaded decidedly yesterday and time money was quoted firmly.

Prospects of a large Government bond issue, increased taxes and the drain of funds from the avenues of productive effort do not, under the circumstances of the moment, warrant analogies from the Spanish war of 1898. The situation has been through a tremendous economic readjustment and was favored by political conditions propitious for business and financial endeavor. Possibly some reasonable clues as to the way in which the dominant developments of the day are to be regarded will be furnished by European finance. It was noticeable that yesterday, just as was the case last week, our Mexican situation was one of the influences making for business and weakness in the financial markets abroad. Bond values were also affected adversely by rumors current about the health of the Austrian Emperor.

Foreign exchange here continued firm around the level of 4.87 for demand sterling, the attainment of which has suggested tendencies which might cause gold to leave the country. These tendencies may be overcome if our Government has to go to the extent of suspending military operations. Europe would undoubtedly be a buyer of such securities as Washington may have to issue.

Mexican matters relegated all other subjects to obscurity. Copper metal prices were reported as weak, thus belaying the glowing version which is persistently given of the position of the metal and of copper consuming industries. Statements made at the United States Steel Corporation meeting with respect to the wage scale in the steel industry and the competitive conditions established by the revised tariff lent themselves to inferences corroborative of recent reports that lower wages were impending.

NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE PRICES.

Railroad and Other Shares.
MONDAY, APRIL 20, 1914.

Closing.— Bid.	Div.	Rate.	Sales.	Open- ing.	High- est.	Low- est.	Last.	Net Change.
26	28 1/4	..	7400 Alaska G.M.	26	26 1/2	26 1/2	—	—
41 1/2	42 1/2	..	2000 Allis-Chalmers pf.	42	42	42	—	—
72 1/2	72 1/2	6	30200 Amal Copper.	72 1/2	73 1/2	72 1/2	—	—
21	21 1/2	..	1000 Am Beet Sugar.	22 1/2	21	21	—	—
53 1/2	54 1/2	4	400 Am Ag Chem.	54	54	54	—	—
85 1/2	90	..	100 Am Brake Shoe.	87 1/2	87 1/2	87 1/2	—	—
12 1/2	12 1/2	8	100 Am Brass Shoe pf.	12 1/2	12 1/2	12 1/2	—	—
23 1/2	23 1/2	..	15000 Am Can.	22 1/2	23 1/2	22 1/2	—	—
88 1/2	88 1/2	..	900 Am Can pf.	89 1/2	88 1/2	88 1/2	—	—
48 1/2	48 1/2	2	1000 Am Car & F.	49 1/2	48 1/2	48 1/2	—	—
61	67	6	100 Am Cities pf.	61 1/2	61 1/2	61 1/2	—	—
83 1/2	84 1/2	7	10 Am Coal Prod.	83 1/2	83 1/2	83 1/2	—	—
39 1/2	40	..	300 Am Cos Oil.	40	40	40	—	—
21 1/2	23	..	300 Am Hide & Leather pf.	21 1/2	21 1/2	21 1/2	—	—
28	28 1/2	..	100 Am Ice.	28	28	28	—	—
30	30 1/2	..	100 Am Ind.	30	30 1/2	30	—	—
64	64 1/2	4	1000 Am Smelting.	64	64	64	—	—
101 1/2	101 1/2	12	200 Am Smelting pf.	101 1/2	101 1/2	101 1/2	—	—
157	160	..	600 Am Snuff.	160	157 1/2	157 1/2	—	—
99 1/2	100	..	1000 Am Sugar.	100	100	100	—	—
119 1/2	120 1/2	7	100 Am Tobacco.	120	120	120	—	—
75	76 1/2	..	100 Am Woolen pf.	75 1/2	75 1/2	75 1/2	—	—
32 1/2	33 1/2	12	100 Atch. Top & F. pf.	33 1/2	33 1/2	33 1/2	—	—
60	60 1/2	..	100 Atch. Top & S. F. pf.	60 1/2	60 1/2	60 1/2	—	—
119	120 1/2	7	100 Atch. Top & S. F. pf.	120	120	120	—	—
27	28	..	2 Bank of Commerce.	17 1/2	17 1/2	17 1/2	—	—
190	190	..	100 Baldwin Loco.	48	48	48	—	—
39	39 1/2	..	100 Bethlehem Steel.	39 1/2	39 1/2	39 1/2	—	—
264	27	..	1000 B. F. Goodrich.	27	27 1/2	26 1/2	—	—
89 1/2	89 1/2	6	3000 Bldwyn Gas Trans.	90 1/2	89 1/2	89 1/2	—	—
124 1/2	127	..	1000 Blyden Gas Trans.	125 1/2	125 1/2	125 1/2	—	—
2	3	..	1000 Blyden Gas Trans.	2	2	2	—	—
214	22	..	400 Cal Pet.	22	22	22	—	—
58 1/2	65	..	200 Canada Southern.	60 1/2	60 1/2	60 1/2	—	—
187 1/2	199	10	10400 Can Pacific.	199	200 1/2	198 1/2	—	—
314 1/2	314 1/2	..	3100 Can Leather.	314 1/2	314 1/2	314 1/2	—	—
99	100	..	100 Can Leather pf.	99 1/2	99 1/2	99 1/2	—	—
51 1/2	52	4	200 C & O.	51 1/2	51 1/2	51 1/2	—	—
130 1/2	131	7	100 Ch & Northwest.	131 1/2	131 1/2	131 1/2	—	—
114 1/2	12	..	100 Ch & West pf.	114 1/2	114 1/2	114 1/2	—	—
32	32	..	100 Ch & W. & P. pf.	31	31	31	—	—
97 1/2	98 1/2	5	1000 Ch & W. & P. pf.	98 1/2	97 1/2	97 1/2	—	—
26 1/2	26 1/2	..	10700 Erie.	25 1/2	26 1/2	26 1/2	—	—
42 1/2	42 1/2	..	1000 Erie 1st pf.	43 1/2	42 1/2	42 1/2	—	—
34 1/2	35 1/2	..	1000 Erie 2d pf.	36	36	36	—	—
52 1/2	52 1/2	..	525 Federal M & S pf.	52 1/2	52 1/2	52 1/2	—	—
117	117 1/2	..	1000 F. W. Woolworth pf.	117 1/2	117 1/2	117 1/2	—	—
144	144	8	500 Gen Elec Co.	144	144	143 1/2	—	—
99 1/2	100	..	500 Gen Motor.	99 1/2	99 1/2	99 1/2	—	—
314 1/2	314 1/2	..	2700 Gen Motor pf.	314 1/2	314 1/2	314 1/2	—	—
51	52	14	1000 Gil Nor Gte pf.	52	52	52	—	—
102 1/2	104	..	1000 Harvester N.J.	103	102 1/2	102 1/2	—	—
109 1/2	109 1/2	6	300 Hill Central.	110	110	110	—	—
24	25	..	100 K. C. F. Scott pf.	24	24	24	—	—
30 1/2	31	4	100 Lack Steel.	32	32	32	—	—
66	67	..	100 Laclede Gas.	66	66	66	—	—
215	220	12	100 Liggett & Myers.	218	218	218	—	—
133 1/2	133 1/2	..	1000 Lighly Highway.	135 1/2	135 1/2	135 1/2	—	—
61	61	..	3200 Nevada Con.	63 1/2	63 1/2	63 1/2	—	—
179	182	6	1000 New England & H.	182	182	182	—	—
314 1/2	314 1/2	..	5000 N.Y. & N.H.	314 1/2	314 1/2	314 1/2	—	—
51	52	14	1000 N.Y. & N.H. & L.	52	52	52	—	—
102 1/2	103	6	1000 N.Y. & N.H. & W.	102 1/2	102 1/2	102 1/2	—	—
99	100	..	1000 N.Y. & N.H. & W. pf.	99	99	99	—	—
178 1/2	179	..	1000 N.Y. & N.H. & W. pf.	178 1/2	179	179	—	—
47 1/2	47 1/2	..	1000 N.Y. & N.H. & W. pf.	47 1/2	47 1/2	47 1/2	—	—
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